

# Wisconsin Value-added Food & Farm Business Consultants

For questions, please contact Kietra Olson at [kietra.olson@wisconsin.gov](mailto:kietra.olson@wisconsin.gov)



## **Angie Sullivan**

WI DATCP

[Angie.Sullivan@Wisconsin.gov](mailto:Angie.Sullivan@Wisconsin.gov)

608-224-5095

Statewide

No Fee

I have a long history of working directly one-on-one with farmers providing technical assistance, production assistance and financial assistance. My areas of expertise include providing resources to transitioning farmers, assisting them by reviewing their finances and helping them make decisions related to adding or scaling back enterprises, cutting budgets, increasing income, and devising a plan to work with lenders. I owned and operated a three-acre organic vegetable/flower CSA for seven years in northern Wisconsin. I also sold to local restaurants and at a farmers market, which I also managed. I've also raised small livestock for sale, including chickens, lambs, pigs and dairy goats.



## **Claire Strader**

UW Extension Dane County & FairShare CSA Coalition

[strader.claire@countyofdane.com](mailto:strader.claire@countyofdane.com) or [claire@csacoalition.org](mailto:claire@csacoalition.org)

608-224-3710

Dane, Sauk, Columbia, Dodge, Jefferson, Rock, Green, and Iowa counties

No Fee

In 2001, I was hired as the farm director for Troy Community Farm and was tasked with starting the farm. I cleared the land, laid out the fields, set up the production systems, established markets, hired staff, and also designed a formal internship program that trained 12 to 14 farm interns each year. Before starting Troy Community Farm, I worked on three other farms in New Hampshire, California and Wisconsin, including Luna Circle Farm. After apprenticing at Luna Circle in 1993, I became a full partner in the business. Using my experiences, in 2012 and 2013 I apprenticed two farmers through the MOSES Farmer to Farmer Mentorship Program, and I currently offer assistance, provide resources and outline next steps in my position as Small-Scale and Organic Produce Educator for UW Extension Dane County and the FairShare CSA Coalition.



## **Courtney Berner**

University of Wisconsin Center for Cooperatives

[cberner@wisc.edu](mailto:cberner@wisc.edu)

608-890-0966

Statewide

Fees are based on a sliding scale that takes into consideration a range of factors, including: size and revenue of cooperative, stage of development, project size and scope and prior knowledge of project. Some services are subsidized by grant support and offered free of charge.

My areas of specialty are business plan revisions and review, determining appropriate business models, and cooperatives. Since 2010, I have provided technical assistance and counsel to cooperatives and groups interested in starting cooperative enterprises, specifically around capitalization, governance, membership structure, and the start-up process. Many of these businesses are in the food and agriculture sectors. The list of food and farm businesses I have counseled includes: Fifth Season Cooperative, Wisconsin Food Hub Cooperative, Fair Field Flowers, North America Aronia Cooperative, Wisconsin Hop Exchange, Spring Rose Growers Cooperative, Intertribal Maple Syrup Producers Cooperative, and more. I have assisted in the development of several feasibility studies and business plans for food and farm businesses.

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## **Cindy Jaggi**

Food to Market  
[cjaggiedp@tds.net](mailto:cjaggiedp@tds.net)  
608-712-1980  
Statewide

\$50 to \$100/hr. Fees are based on a sliding scale that considers: size and revenue of operation, stage of development, and project size and scope. Some services are subsidized by

grant support and offered free of charge.

I specialize in sales and marketing and provide food and farm businesses technical assistance through my company, Food to Market ([www.food2mkt.com](http://www.food2mkt.com)). Food to Market is a one-stop resource for food entrepreneurs, food producers, processors and food hubs looking for expertise and resources to start their food business or food venture, manage costs and mitigate risk as they grow and expand. Food ventures need specialized technical assistance, education, and a peer network to start up, grow, and succeed. I work with mid-sized and small companies in the areas of strategic business planning, food financing and profitability, new product and market development and marketing and distribution.



## **Eric S. Brown**

Management Consultant (co-chairman of Madison Area Business Consultants-MABC)  
[esbrown@sbcglobal.net](mailto:esbrown@sbcglobal.net)  
608-274-3055  
Statewide  
\$100 to \$150/hr

In my 28 years as a management consultant working with entrepreneurs, I have had about 700 client companies; of these, probably two dozen have been involved in food production and food processing. The technical assistance provided has dealt primarily with the business aspects of

starting or growing the business. Tasks I typically help with include: developing and refining the business model, preparing a written business plan to help guide the client and to help in obtaining financing, researching the potential market through interviews and by using written or online materials, developing and outlining a recommended marketing strategy, preparing financial projections (such as projected income statements and projected cash flow analyses), researching opportunities for grants and preparing grant applications for client companies.



## **Gene Schriefer**

UW-Extension  
[gene.schriefer@ces.uwex.edu](mailto:gene.schriefer@ces.uwex.edu)  
Iowa County

I work with farmers, beginning farmers and rural landowners in helping them develop farm business cash flow, enterprise budgets, and balance sheets. I consult and advise on suitability

of land resource for different agriculture ventures including soil fertility and crop rotations. I've worked with local producers on growing and pressing oilseeds, canola, camellina and sunflower; a grower developing a sweet corn meal business; and a pastured poultry growing business marketing in Chicago. Besides working one on one with farmers and rural landowners on farm financials, I own and operate a small beef and sheep farm and am a founding member of Wisconsin Meadows Grassfed Beef Cooperative.

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## **Jason Fischbach**

UW-Extension

[jason.fischbach@ces.uwex.edu](mailto:jason.fischbach@ces.uwex.edu)

715-373-6104 ext. 5

Iron, Ashland, Bayfield, Douglas, and Sawyer counties

No Fee

As an Agriculture Agent, I have been involved in supporting the local food system in the Chequamegon Bay region of northern Wisconsin since 2006. In my time there, I've created

South Shore Meats, a cooperative marketing and sales venture with six beef producers and pork producers in northern Wisconsin; created the Bayfield Regional Food Producers Cooperative, a marketing, aggregation, and sales cooperative currently with 22 members; and provided direct assistance since 2006 to at least 18 farm businesses in the region on issues related to product development and marketing. I currently co-own and operate Wild Hollow Farm with my wife, selling fruits and vegetables in the Chequamegon Bay Region. I also co-own and operate Pasture Perfect Poultry with four other producers, selling chickens and turkeys direct to customers in northern Wisconsin.



## **Jenny Doty**

Angelic Organics Learning Center

[jenny@learn-grow-connect.org](mailto:jenny@learn-grow-connect.org)

815-243-1553

Green, Rock and Walworth counties

\$25 to \$50/hr

I provide farm business technical assistance via two programs that we offer at Angelic Organics Learning Center: Stateline Farm Beginnings and the Farm Asset Builder Program.

Stateline Farm Beginnings is a year-long strategic business planning course for farmers. My role in this program is to review partial and complete business plans submitted by farmers at the end of the classroom portion of this program, and to provide feedback. There are about four business plans to review each year. The Farm Asset Builder program is a matched-savings program that incentivizes farmers to save for the purchase of a business asset. We have four farm businesses in the program each year, and I oversee review of their cash flow statements and balance sheets and make recommendations to refine their projections. I have worked with start-up and experienced farmers for the past four years in my role as Program Director of the Farmer Training Initiative at The Learning Center. Previously, I worked for a non-profit mid-scale vegetable farm for four years.

## **Jim Gage**

James D. Gage Consulting

[jdgage60@gmail.com](mailto:jdgage60@gmail.com)

920-723-0083

Statewide

\$50 to \$100/hr

I've supplied value-added business assistance including: business plans, financials, marketing assessment, and feasibility studies for farmstead meat ventures; integrated farms (veggies and meat); shrimp production and sales; ancient grain production and sales; and other areas. I'm also a grant writer for food and farm businesses – grants have included state, federal and foundations. I specialize in USDA Value-Added Producer Grants (VAPG) and have assisted with 60 client applications in the last 11 years.

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## **Lisa Shirek**

Painted Rock Farms  
[earthsnaturals@gmail.com](mailto:earthsnaturals@gmail.com)

715-340-2495

Statewide

\$25 to \$50/hr

I have consulted with small farmers throughout the state and have worked with new value-added businesses through the Village Hive in Amherst. I am the owner/operator of Painted Rock Farms, a farm collective.



## **Lisa Stout**

WI DATCP

[lisa.stout@wisconsin.gov](mailto:lisa.stout@wisconsin.gov)

608-224-5126

Statewide

No Fee

I started working at the WI Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection in 2000.

I provide export assistance to Wisconsin food and agricultural companies. When meeting with companies, I try to determine if they have the staff, production capacity and financial resources to start exporting. I provide international marketing information and assistance to Wisconsin food and agriculture companies including recommending appropriate distribution channels, conducting market research, providing documentation assistance, and buyer introductions.



## **Lois A. Federman**

WI DATCP

[lois.federman@wi.gov](mailto:lois.federman@wi.gov)

608-224-5124

Statewide with focus on: Grant, Crawford, Iowa, La Fayette, Sauk, Richland & Green counties

No Fee

I am the director of the Something Special *from* Wisconsin™ (SSfW™) branded marketing program. The program was founded in 1983 and is administered by the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection. Since July 2005, I have worked in the role of Ag Marketing Consultant Senior, with my primary responsibility being to lead and manage the SSfW™ program with a focus on development and promotion of Wisconsin's agricultural products and producers. In my other life, I am the co-owner/operator of Marr's Valley View Farms, LLC – a 600-acre family farm operation which I grew up on. I have experience in developing and directing strategic marketing, brand identity, processors, product development, packaging and labeling, customer acquisition and retention, cost negotiation, pricing strategy, competitive analysis, inventory management, and legal requirements. I also started the first Meat CSA (Community Supported Agriculture) in the state of Wisconsin, selling into Chicago, Madison and Milwaukee.

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**Mary Pat Carlson**

UW-Extension

[mpcarlson1@gmail.com](mailto:mpcarlson1@gmail.com)

Statewide

I have over 16 years of business incubation/entrepreneurship experience with direct one-on-one, group-, and community-based technical consulting in: food manufacturing, business development, marketing, and distribution. Additionally, I have 20 years of experience working with non-profit organizations (grants, fundraising, training, volunteer recruitment). I also have 40 years of operational experience in family farming including: orchards, specialty crops, and floral production. I'm experienced in direct-to-consumer sales, retail/on-farm market, farmers markets, trade shows, wholesale sales, and on-line sales.



**Norm Monsen**

WI DATCP

[norm.monsen@wisconsin.gov](mailto:norm.monsen@wisconsin.gov)

608-224-5135

Statewide

No Fee

My experience providing technical/mentor experience to food and farm businesses started in 1993 when I joined the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade, and Consumer Protection. My first role was working with farm families in distress, including helping them find options to grow the profitability of their farms. Over the years, I've had the opportunity and pleasure of working with hundreds of dairy farmers and dairy processors, as well as supporting resource agencies in the areas of business planning, market development, strategic planning and industry opportunities and challenges.



**Sarah Elliott**

WI DATCP

[sarah.elliott@wisconsin.gov](mailto:sarah.elliott@wisconsin.gov)

608-224-5046

Statewide

No Fee

I have 12 years of experience working on diversified organic farms, primarily vegetable farms, in four different states. While a farm employee, I gained hands-on experience with many components of running a successful farm business including: farm labor; crop planning and management; developing direct sales channels, such as farmers' market planning and promotion and CSA planning, recruitment, and execution; and personnel recruitment, hiring, management, and retention. In addition, for two years, I taught canning and preserving classes for the North Carolina Cooperative Extension, providing me with valuable insight on packaging, labeling, and food safety practices, processes, and regulations for small food entrepreneurs. I've helped to develop HACCP and food safety plans, product recall plans, labeling, packaging, delivery schedules, etc. so farmers could connect to the institutional market. Currently, I provide direct technical assistance to food hubs, distributors, processors, and schools. This technical assistance includes a wide variety of tasks such as connecting them with appropriate producers/suppliers; developing appropriate menus and nutritional analyses; consulting on lunchroom design and other low-cost initiatives which encourage healthy eating; and program promotion and branding.



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## **Sarah Larson**

REAP Food Group

[sarahl@reapfoodgroup.org](mailto:sarahl@reapfoodgroup.org)

608-310-7832

Colombia, Sauk, Richland, Vernon, Crawford, Grant, Lafayette, Iowa, Green, Rock, and Dane

No Fee

For the past year, my role in my position at REAP Food Group has been to facilitate connections and broker sales for food and farm businesses through promotion to buyers (restaurants, retailers, and hospitals). Previously, I served for 1.5 years as the Statewide AmeriCorps Farm to School Program Manager, working at the Department of Agriculture, Trade, and Consumer Protection, where I provided technical assistance to over 25 AmeriCorps Farm to School members. In that position, I helped guide their work with food service directors, farmers, and teachers in over 15 communities, with a goal of increasing local purchasing and providing nutritional education in the school environment. Prior to my work with DATCP and REAP, I spent almost five years working with Wisconsin Specialty Protein (WSP) and the tera'swhey brand. While there, I learned what it takes to bring a product to market (from formulations to branding to category review submissions to getting products on the shelf). Additionally, I gained direct experience related to the challenges and successes of starting a food business, carving your niche in the market, and maintaining market share.



## **Teresa Engel**

WI DATCP

[teresa.engel@wi.gov](mailto:teresa.engel@wi.gov)

608-224-5101

Statewide with focus on: Trempealeau, Jackson, La Crosse, Monroe, Vernon, Crawford, Richland, Grant, and Iowa counties

No Fee

I have been providing technical assistance to farms and/or food businesses since 2007. I have on-farm experience in many different sectors of agriculture including: organic fruits and veggies, organic grains and row crops, seed production, conventional commodity crops, and beef production. Currently, I am the director of the Buy Local, Buy Wisconsin program, which aims to increase the amount of local food produced and sold to local markets. One of the key components of this job is the management of the Buy Local, Buy Wisconsin grant program, which provides me with the opportunity to review business plans and provide comments for improvement. Prior to my work at WI DATCP, I worked with the MN Food Association and helped create the food hub, Big River Foods. In addition to finding markets for growers there, I also provided one-on-one technical assistance in post-harvest handling, quality control, food safety, pricing and other areas to prepare growers for selling into wholesale markets. You might also find me marketing and selling my family's Driftless Organics Sunflower Oil.

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**Theresa Feiner**

WI DATCP

[theresa.feiner@wi.gov](mailto:theresa.feiner@wi.gov)

608-224-5140

Statewide

No Fee

As the Farm to Business Program Director at REAP Food Group, I recruited and maintained partnership arrangements with farmers, producers, wholesale food service buyers, and retail buyers to build a growing network of operations committed to purchasing from and supporting Wisconsin farmers and food manufacturers. I worked 1:1 with many food producers on how to expand into wholesale markets and, alternatively, with many food buyers on how to integrate more Wisconsin agricultural products into their operation. Currently, at DATCP, I regularly provide technical assistance to value-added food producers, helping them expand, diversify, and reach new markets. Previously at DATCP, I coordinated, promoted, and facilitated technical business trainings for producers. I also surveyed food producers and worked with industry partners to assess current educational needs of food producers.